

Public Perversion of the Mother Spirit

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No man is ever condemned by his mother. Vicious, dissolute, false, vile he may be, but his mother will think well of him. All who know him may detest him, except his mother. Her opinion of him is not determined by his conduct. She does not sit in judgment upon him, balancing the good and evil he may have done. She is at once the victim and the exponent of an instinct. The primal fact that he is her son settles the controversy as to his worth before it arises. She loves him, therefore she admires him. If others scorn and attack him she is the more roused to cherish and defend him. "It is easier for one mother to support seven sons than for seven sons to support one mother."

It is obvious that it would never do to appoint a woman as judge of the court before which her son was to be tried. Plutarch tells of a stern classical hero who pronounced the sentence of death on his son. But he, after all, was a man and only a secondary incarnation of the parental instinct. We will not find a woman who condemns her son, however black may be his record. If we should find such a woman we would condemn her, thinking her abnormal and pathological in her sex.

Indeed, we do not want to find such a woman. One of the supreme treasures of the race is the passion of motherhood, which despises the ethical prudences and discretions in its irrational and vicarious devotion to its offspring. After the best in a man is due to the presence or memory of a mother, who had little education or worldly experience, or practical judgment, or even catholic sympathy, but who loved him with a love which melted his heart. It was the mother in the race who, in the primitive development of manhood, invented kindness. It is the army of mothers in the world to-day which, more than anything else, keeps life sweet.

The mother passion is adorable when its object is the son of the mother. But when that passion selects another object the perversion is full of menace. For mother love is a force so untainted in danger, so reckless of consequences, and so oblivious to moral distinctions, that the world is at once put in peril whenever it begins to operate in any other region than the maternal relationship.

The story is told of an impudent boy who shouted at a lady fondling a spaniel as she drove by in her luxurious carriage. "Throw away your pup and get a baby." The boy had hold of a fundamental truth; the necessity of the continuance of the race. If women substitute dogs for babies, devoting the time, care and affection to brutes which nature intends for their own children, where is the next generation to come from? Such a perversion of function on the part of women means nothing less than race suicide.

It is not, however, of woman's temptation to contraception that I am now writing. It is rather of a few of the long list of the perversions and misapplications of this magnificent mother-spirit which riot in human society. In every one of them is found the same tragic and disastrous result. One is brought to regard them as he might the ruin of a glorious cathedral like Rheims wantonly wrecked in war; or the spectacle of a mighty intellect turned into idiocy; or the valor of a great sacrifice which through some sinister mischance brings ruin instead of rescue. One wonders is it true

"That the highest suffer most,
That the strongest wander furthest,
And most hopelessly are lost."

Patriotism is a noble virtue. Its glories have been sung by all the bards. But no poem can tell of the capacity patriotism possesses to provoke heroism like the great war of our own days. All these death-scouring heroes, on both sides, are fighting for their native lands. The cry that rallied all Germany, closing up the gaping breaches in her social organization, was "To the defence of the Fatherland." And it is Patriotism, arrogantly assuming the rights and privileges of the mother-spirit, which is to blame for the slaughter of the past two years. No man should love his country as a mother loves her son. No man has a right to do so. There are other countries which he must consider if he is to function as a citizen of the world. That temper which concentrates all its affection upon the object, repudiating all rival claimants for attention, cannot be allowed to love of country, upon pain of the perpetuation of war.

There is the same perversion in political partisanship. The partisan loves his party with the pride and fondness of a mother. The party becomes the

sacred thing in his political life. So the claim is made and agreed to, that "The first duty of a party is to maintain itself in power."

Now, it is part of the argument of this article that partyism is not only justifiable, but that it may be a truly noble thing. It is a kind of lesser patriotism. When a company of men band themselves together to accomplish some purpose which seems to them to mean the increase of the glory, or power, or happiness of their fellow citizens, they have acted nobly. Their comradeship, the mutual forbearance and assistance which their association together produces, fosters an affection for each other. This is right and praiseworthy. But it is when the imperious mother-spirit, blind and merciless to all but the one object of love, and fierce in his defence against any foe whatever, captures a political party that the state is put in jeopardy. Then the inspiring purpose which organized the party is forgotten. It becomes loved for its own sake. Everything becomes fair in its fight for life. The country is betrayed for the sake of the party.

I am not confident that latter-day feminism will approve the argumentation of this article. Ellen Key would doubtless repudiate even motherhood's right to the indulgence of such an emotional ecstasy. But this is the only possible criticism. If we allow it to mothers we dare not allow it to anyone else. Their monopoly must be protected. For once this spirit enters into public affairs it runs amuck. In international affairs it means Bernhardtism, the subjugation of Belgium and the sinking of the Lusitania. Did not one German editor say, "All the lives on the Lusitania were not worth that of one German soldier?" In national affairs it means patronage in the civil service, squabbling in parliament, and the "pork barrel" in the constituencies.

Without doubt the presence in a state of a considerable body of independent voters is a great check upon the aberrations and extravagances of political parties. But the whole remedy does not lie there. The electorate is not sufficiently enlightened, or sufficiently interested, for the government to be carried on without parties. If there were no parties in Canada we should have political chaos. The mass of men will be moved by tradition and leadership. What is needed is to ethicize the party loyalty. After all a party is only a party. There is nothing sacrosanct about it. It is based on no elementary instinct. It is but a convenient and desirable method of achieving the partial organization of political democracy which the present state of human character limits us to. A man has no right to love his party as a mother loves her son.

Have Canadian Cities Stopped Growing?

A Few Comparisons With the United States Showing the Possibilities for Future City Development in Canada.

By GUY GATHCART PELTON.

In the dull days before the war, when a lull in the real estate boom was felt from coast to coast in Canada, the critics at home and abroad got busy and accused us in Canada of many evils. One of these was that our cities had grown too fast and that we were sending too much population to the cities.

Even in the day of the real estate boom in western cities there was a big increase going on in the rural population of Canada, quite as large as the increase in urban population, and the figures of the present day show that the rural population of the Dominion is quite in proportion to the urban population. In fact, we are as a country more sanely populated than other parts of this continent.

Comparisons at this time are interesting. They give us the opportunity of figuring out just how far we can go before we have reached the limit. We look at Toronto and Montreal and get the idea that they are wonder cities for population. In many respects so they are, yet in the United States they would be included in the statistical reports under Group 2, for there are in the United States nine cities with a population exceeding five hundred thousand. Naturally we think of Chicago and New York, but we mustn't forget that there are Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Cleveland, St. Louis and Boston — all bigger than Toronto.

United States has ten cities with populations from 300,000 to 500,000. We in Canada scarcely realize that New Orleans, Washington, Newark, Buffalo, Cincinnati and numerous other United States cities

are much bigger than Toronto and equal to Montreal in population. In the United States the cities of 200,000 to 500,000 population are put in Group 2. We have only two cities in Canada in our Group 1 that can boast of anywhere near these populations. Winnipeg is climbing ahead, but it hasn't yet reached the 300,000 class.

There are 30 cities in United States in the Group of cities having populations from 100,000 to 300,000, cities most of them bigger than Winnipeg. Lots of us Canadians have heard very little about Reading, Pennsylvania, or Camden, New Jersey, or Trenton, New Jersey. We have fastened our eyes upon New York and Chicago, and have hoped that some day Toronto would be the New York of Canada, and Winnipeg the Chicago of Canada. And so they will be. No true Canadian doubts that.

The West is proud and justly proud of its cities. We have commenced to think that Edmonton and Calgary and Regina were growing too fast, that the pace couldn't keep up. Yet the United States has 60 cities which are in the class from 50,000 to 100,000 population and I can name a half dozen that not one out of a hundred Canadians have ever heard of. For example—who in Toronto or Winnipeg had heard of Passaic, New Jersey, Little Rock, Arkansas or Chattanooga, Tennessee? Yet these cities are all bigger than Calgary or Edmonton or Regina, and most of them are bigger than Vancouver.

In the number of cities of from 30,000 to 50,000 Canada is still in its infancy. This is the size of city which is possible in almost any rich agricultural community, yet outside of Ontario Canada has

very few, and very few in Ontario. Did you ever hear of Lynchburg, Virginia, or Muskogee, Oklahoma? Well, they are bigger cities than Regina or Moose Jaw or Saskatoon or Guelph.

To claim that Canada's urban population grew too fast and will not again have any substantial progress is a claim made only by critics who have notion of other countries. Canada, with its eight million people has only three cities of populations over 200,000, these being Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. The Dominion has only about 20 cities with a population exceeding 30,000, as compared with 200 in the United States.

Nova Scotia and New Brunswick each only has one city over 20,000 and Prince Edward Island hasn't any city over 20,000. Quebec has three or four, and Ontario some half dozen. Saskatchewan and Alberta each have three cities in this class, while British Columbia also has three. Outside of Winnipeg, Manitoba is without a good sized city, though Brandon is in the 15,000 class.

The United States has hundreds of cities of from 10,000 to 15,000 population, and that's the reason the residents of such towns as Swift Current, North Battleford, Red Deer, Welland, Prince Albert, Nanaimo, and numerous other cities, have faith in the future and believe that they will grow as Canada, and that they will become much more important centres of population than they are at the present time.

And the faith of the residents of these small Canadian cities is well founded, for they are backed by resources quite as rich as any of the resources which have built up the cities of the United States.

The boosters of Norfolk, Virginia, will tell you that the resources which built up that city and are keeping it together are the little truck farms in the district. There isn't a province in Canada that can-

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